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Copy to: 1-INS, NYC

Report of: SA DOMINIC A. PRINCIPPE Office: NEW YORK
 Date: SEP 7 1973

Field Office File No.: 100-81612 Bureau File No.: 100-211013

Title: ALBANIAN ACTIVITIES IN THE UNITED STATES

Character: INTERNAL SECURITY - ALBANIA

Synopsis: Information concerning NYC Branch of WAO and Albanian-American organizations set out. Albanian emigres demonstrated on 4/1/73, at UN, NYC, in protest of execution of Albanian priest by Albanian Government. Information about Albanian nationalist parties in exile set out. Source had no information that Albanian-Americans had membership in the CP, USA, or were engaged in propaganda activities in behalf of the communist regime of Albania.

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DETAILS:

I. PROMINENT ORGANIZATIONS IN SUPPORT OF THE COMMUNIST REGIME OF ALBANIA

A. New York City (NYC) Branch of the Free Albania Organization (FAO)

On August 6, 1973, NY T-1 stated that NYC Branch of the FAO is an Albanian-American fraternal organization with national headquarters in Boston, Massachusetts. According to NY T-1, there had been no formal meeting or functions of the NYC Branch of the FAO during the spring and summer months. Inasmuch as ARMY VISO, leader of the Branch, has been out of the NYC area operating his estate New York summer resort at Fosterboro, New York. In LISO's absence, Mrs. ARETI VISO and MAJLISHEMBO, two of the few active members of the Branch, have submitted occasional news items about members of the NYC Branch to the national organization which have been printed in "Liria", official publication of the FAO.

On June 20, 1973, NY T-2 stated that Mrs. ARETI VISO, wife of JAMES VISO, a member of the NYC Branch of the FAO who had died in Albania while on a visit to that country, would be departing for a visit to Albania on September 17, 1973, for the purpose of commemorating the death of her husband.

NY T-3 advised in August, 1967, that "Liria", the official publication of the FAO, is sympathetic to the communist regime of Albania.

NY T-4 advised in January, 1968, that "Liria" is a pro-communist publication which supports the Government of Albania.

II. ORGANIZATIONS WHOSE ACTIVITIES OPPOSE THE COMMUNIST REGIME OF ALBANIA

A. St. Nicholas Albanian Orthodox Church

On August 14, 1973, NY T-2 stated the St. Nicholas Albanian Orthodox Church is located at 181-14 Midland Parkway, Jamaica Estates, New York, and it is operated under the constitution of the Albanian Orthodox Church in the United States which is headquartered in Boston, Massachusetts, under the

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spiritual leadership of Bishop STEPHEN LASKO. LARRY PILLARY is the leading layman of the St. Nicholas Albanian Orthodox Church as Chairman of the Executive Committee. The Pastor of the Church is Reverend CHRISTO COSTA. NY T-2 said that with few exceptions, the parishioners of the St. Nicholas Albanian Orthodox Church are opposed to the Communist regime of Albania.

The following information appeared on page four of the March 2, 1973, issue of "Birim", official Albanian-language newspaper of the WAO:

The annual meeting of the Church Committee of the St. Nicholas Albanian Orthodox Church in NYC was held on December 31, 1972, and the following officers were elected:

LARRY PILLARY	Chairman
AL FOUNDRIS	Vice-Chairman
GEOGLIANA ALGOR	Financial Secretary
JOHN NASI	Treasurer
LARRY JANTRE	Corresponding Secretary
JAMES LIGLIEN	Recording Secretary
CONSTANTINE PILLARY	Gifts Chairman

B. Pan-Albanian Federation of America (VATRA)

On August 27, 1973, NY T-5 stated the national headquarters of VATRA, a fraternal Albanian-American organization, is located in Boston, Massachusetts. The NYC Branch of VATRA is headed by HANIZ DANI and ZEF PASHKA DEDRI is Secretary of the Branch. VATRA has no permanent location in NYC and meetings are held at Young Men's Christian Association, 215 West 23rd Street, NYC.

NY T-5 said the NYC Branch of VATRA conducted a meeting on Sunday, August 18, 1973, for the purpose of coming to a decision relative to the position of the Branch regarding the Communist Government of Albania. The Branch decided to recommend that the national organization of VATRA adopt a firm attitude in opposition to the Communist Government of Albania.

III. ALBANIAN NATIONALIST PARTIES IN EXILE WHICH OPPOSE THE COMMUNIST REGIME OF ALBANIA

A. Balli Kombetar Organization (BKO)

On August 27, 1973, NY T-5 stated the BKO continues as an Albanian nationalist party in exile composed of the followers of HASAN IOSTI, a resident of California, who formerly held a high position in the Albanian Government prior

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to the Communist takeover of that country. NY T-5 said the BKO has very little influence in Albanian circles. According to NY T-5, the BKO is completely disorganized and is divided into two factions. One faction is headed by JUSUF LOZAJ and CAZIM SHKAKA is the Secretary General of this group. The other faction, formerly headed by KADRI CAMPANI, who is deceased, is barely functioning under HALIL BEGUJA, Secretary General, who was successfully operated on for a kidney transplant in April, 1973.

B. BDI: Komunisti Independent
(National Independent Bloc) (BKI)

On August 27, 1973, NY T-3 stated the BKI is headquartered in Rome, Italy, and is headed by LEKJ VERNACKI. ERNSTO POLIOI is the Secretary-General of the BKI, and he also serves as Editor of the official publication of the BKI. The NYC Branch of the BKI maintains an office at 203 West 42nd Street, NYC, and the head of the NYC Branch is NDUE GJONSHARKAJ.

According to NY T-3, the BKI has issued a position paper in which the BKI denounced the Legality Party and stated the BKI would not unite with King LEKA in his efforts to unify all emigre groups. NY T-3 said the BKI had become angry because the Legality Party had accepted NDUE PETER GJONSHARKAJ, head of a small Albanian nationalist party in exile called Herolizma Shqiptare (Albanian Heroism), as a participant in the unity group. NY T-3 said NDUE PETER GJONSHARKAJ had been a member of the BKI and broke away from the group. According to NY T-3, the BKI considers him to be an upstart and a nobody.

On August 6, 1973, NY T-5 stated that MAZAR PUSTINA, Chairman of the National Council of the Legality Party, at a meeting in NYC in March, 1973, had signed an agreement with representatives of other Albanian political parties in exile for a united front which was to be called Lidhja Shqiptare (The Albanian League). The BKI was one of the groups to sign the agreement. NY T-5 said that some members of the Legality Party insisted that a clause be inserted in the unity agreement that the agreement resulted from original unity talks in Madrid, Spain, in July, 1972, under the auspices of King LEKA of the Legality Party. NY T-5 said the BKI objected to such a clause inasmuch as the BKI did not want the Legality Party to receive credit for initiating the unity talks and also because the BKI had not taken part in the Madrid talks. Consequently, NDUE GJONSHARKAJ of the BKI, with the approval of the membership of the BKI, issued an official statement announcing that the BKI would not have any further talks with the Legality Party regarding the unification of Albanian political parties in exile.

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C. Albanian Agrarian Democratic Party
(Dëlli Komitetari) (Agrar)

On August 16, 1973, NY T-3 stated the Agrar has had no change in leadership and continues to operate under the dual leadership of ABASTURERIJI, a resident of France, and VASIL KURTI, who resides in London, England. The NYC Branch of the Agrar does not have permanent quarters and utilizes the Salvation Army Hall in Hackensack, New Jersey, as a meeting place. The head of the NYC Branch of the Agrar is NEXHISPAKURTI. NY T-3 said the activities of the NYC Branch of the Agrar have been curtailed during the summer months and the Branch will soon begin to formulate plans to celebrate Albanian Flag Day in November, 1973.

On April 5, 1973, NY T-3 said the NYC Branch of the Agrar did not officially participate in a demonstration held by Albanian exiles on April 1, 1973, in front of the grounds of the United Nations in NYC and at the Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of Albania to the United Nations (APUN) at 250 East 37th Street, NYC. The demonstration was held in protest of the execution of Reverend SHTEFEN (STEPHEN) KURTI by the Albanian Government for secretly baptizing a child in an Albanian concentration camp. NY T-3 stated the members of the NYC Branch of the Agrar were told they could demonstrate as individuals but not as representatives of the Agrar.

NY T-3 said that in lieu of the participation in the demonstration, the Agrar dedicated the weekly morning radio broadcast on Saturday, March 31, 1973, over Radio Station WHBI, Newark, New Jersey, to Reverend SHTEFEN KURTI. NY T-3 stated that the Agrar condemned the Albanian Government for this act as well as the atheistic policy of the Communist Albanian Government. The Agrar's entire radio broadcast that morning was concerned with this matter.

NY T-3 stated he had been personally acquainted with Reverend KURTI in Albania, and Reverend KURTI had always been opposed to Communism. NY T-3 said the Communist Government of Albania had jailed Reverend KURTI long before the Communist Government of Albania closed the churches and banned religion in Albania.

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NY T-2 said the Albanian Government has not denied the execution of Reverend KURTI; however, the Italian-Albanian Friendship Committee, a Communist organization in Rome, Italy, denied that the Albanian Government had executed Reverend KURTI. As a point of interest NY T-3 said the various Communist parties in Italy name their parties after famous Communist leaders and the Communist Party in Rome is named after ENVER HOXHA, Communist leader in Albania.

D. Lëshitja Party (Grundëtë Komitetare
Lëshitja e Lëshitjeve e Lëshitës (OKLL))

On August 14, 1973, NY T-5 stated the OKLL is a monarchist Albanian nationalist party in exile which sponsors King LEKA, son of deceased King ZOG, as the rightful heir to the throne of Albania. FUAT KUTIJA, as Secretary-General of the OKLL, is the leader of the group. However, KUTIJA's leadership is being challenged by the membership of the OKLL. NY T-5 said SELIM DAMANI, former Secretary-General of the OKLL who is in Turkey, may return to the United States and regain the leadership of the OKLL. FARHOD KERDJI is the head of the NY Branch of the OKLL. NY T-5 said that no further progress has been made by the Lëshitja in the effort to unite all Albanian nationalist parties in exile.

On August 16, 1973, NY T-3 said the membership of the OKLL are dissatisfied with the leadership of FUAT KUTIJA and that SELIM DAMANI was coming back to the United States from Turkey to bring the party together. According to NY T-3, DAMANI has already shipped some of his effects to the United States and DAMANI is expected to arrive himself sometime during September, 1973.

According to NY T-3 the efforts made by the OKLL to unify the Albanian political parties in exile has reached an impasse and it is the opinion of NY T-3 that the OKLL will never attain success in this matter.

On April 9, 1973, NY T-5 said King LEKA was in NYC for about four or five days during the week of April 1, 1973. King LEKA had discussions with PETAR KTONA and SAMI CAUSHI of the IZO. However, nothing new resulted from King LEKA's visit to NYC in the way of developments concerning the efforts of King LEKA and the OKLL to unite the Albanian exile groups.

On May 2, 1973, NY T-3 said the efforts of King LEKA to unite the Albanian exile groups have been fruitless. Since the original meeting in Madrid, Spain, which was sponsored by

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King LESA, those who participated in that meeting again met in November, 1972. At that time, they agreed to meet again in three months. Efforts were being made to work with the Free Albania Committee; however, no formal agreement was made.

NY T-3 stated the unity group again met in early April, 1973, and King LESA reportedly came to the United States for the purpose of taking part in this meeting. NY T-3 said King LESA did not attend the meeting and departed the United States in a huff. ~~MHM~~ DVA, leader of The Friren League, a moving force in the Albanian unity movement, who had come to NYC from California for the April meeting, was much disturbed over the turn of events. DVA had expected the OKL to have ironed things out with the PKL so that the PKL would become a part of the unity group. NY T-3 said DVA is reported to have said at the meeting, "Why did we have to meet? There is nothing new. Call me when somethin' develop." DVA then left for his home in California.

On June 5, 1973, NY T-6 stated that the unity group of Albanian political parties in exile was to be called The Albanian League and it was expected that the group would join with the Free Albania Committee.

NY T-6 explained that the Free Albania Committee represents all Albanians regardless of their political beliefs and is located at 150 5th Avenue, NYC.

NY T-6 said, however, that opposition was still great on the part of a faction within the OKL which claimed it should take over the leadership of the group rather than the Free Albania Committee. This opposition has been so great it has been impossible to hold meetings and decide once and for all which way to go. Some members of The Albanian League maintained that the leadership should unquestionably go to the Free Albania Committee as this is the position they agreed on and they will not go back on their word.

NY T-6 said King LESA had visited NYC last month to bring understanding within his own party. He urged his followers to join with the Free Albania Committee and work together. NY T-6 said it appeared that this did not work and King LESA's influence in his own party is not too great. This misunderstanding is still continuing to a point where members of other political parties in exile have decided, momentarily, to forget the whole idea of unity and give the OKL enough time to solve its problems.

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NY T-6 said The Albanian League decided not to meet again until the OKLL comes forward and joins the rest of the parties within The Albanian League. If the OKLL is not successful in settling its differences by the end of 1973, The Albanian League will call another meeting of the leaders of the political parties in exile, including King ZEKA's. It was expected that this meeting would come up with a solution of the problems.

On July 3, 1973, NY T-3 stated the NY Branch of the OKLL held a meeting on June 24 or 25, 1973, for the purpose of discussing a change in leadership. NY T-3 said an Albanian coffee shop in the lower east side of NYC where some Albanians gather to play cards was held up by a couple of armed men. The hold-up men took all the money, unarmed some of the Albanian card players who carry guns, and locked all of them in the men's room. One of the card players who was robbed was PUAT NYFTIA of the CKLL. This situation involving an official of the OKLL has been an embarrassment and NY T-3 expected that action would be taken by the CKLL against NYFTIA.

E. The Prizren League (Lidhja e Prizrenit)

On August 6, 1973, NY T-5 said The Prizren League, an Albanian nationalist party in exile dedicated to the liberation of the Kosovo area of Yugoslavia, which is inhabited by many people of Albanian extraction, from the control of Yugoslavia, was headed by XHEFER DEVA, a resident of California. ISHAK JEREMIA is Secretary-General of The Prizren League. HYSER TERPEZA is Vice-President of The Prizren League, has resigned due to old age, and KALOSH HAMDJJA, another Vice-President of The Prizren League, was slain by an Albanian emigre named SEID BEKISHA. HAMDJJA had been a wealthy hotel owner in Wisconsin and was the main financial supporter of The Prizren League.

F. Herolizma Shqiptare (Albanian Herolizma)

On August 27, 1973, NY T-3 said Herolizma Shqiptare is a small Albanian nationalist party in exile headed by HIDE PETAR GJORNAKU. NY T-3 said Herolizma Shqiptare will hold a congress in Detroit, Michigan, during the end of October 1973. According to NY T-3, it is anticipated Herolizma Shqiptare will unite with Bashkimi, headed by IORD STURK, and the Peasant Party, headed by LEC SILLAZU of Paris, France. NY T-3 said Herolizma Shqiptare, Bashkimi and the Peasant Party are all minor Albanian exile groups and they hope to attain major status by unification.

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On August 27, 1973, NY T-5 said Herolzma Shqiptare will hold a congress at the Sheraton-Cadillac Hotel, 1114 Washington Boulevard, Detroit, Michigan, on October 25, 26, 1973. NY T-5 said Herolzma Shqiptare has never held a congress and in order to be legally recognized and accepted by the other emigre parties as an anti-Communist Albanian nationalist party in exile, a congress must be held and a Central Committee must be duly elected. NY T-5 said all emigre groups have been invited to attend the congress. It was the opinion of NY T-5 that Herolzma Shqiptare will unite with Bashkimi and the Peasant Party after the congress has been concluded.

IV. MUSLIM ALBANIAN ACTIVITIES
IN THE NYC AREA

On August 6, 1973, NY T-1 said the headquarters for the social and recreational activities of Moslem Albanian-Americans in the NYC area is the Albanian Center, 600 Jamaica Avenue, Brooklyn, NY. MYFIT KEMALI, President, and LEHNI KOKOLJMI, Vice-President, are in the last year of a three-year term of office.

NY T-1 said the NY-New Jersey Islamic Center's Mosque at 1329 Albemarle Road, Brooklyn, NY, serves the religious needs of the Moslem Albanian-Americans in the NYC area. Reverend ISA HODHA handles the religious services and KERKEP KUMARCA is the leading layman.

V. CATHOLIC ALBANIAN ACTIVITIES
IN THE NYC AREA

On August 21, 1973, NY T-7 said the leader of Catholic Albanian-Americans in the NYC area is Reverend ZEF OROSHI, Pastor of Our Lady of Good Counsel Roman Catholic Church, Park Avenue, Bronx, NY. Reverend OROSHI was the main founder of the Albanian-American Catholic League which was established for the purpose of aiding Albanian emigres in finding jobs, obtaining clothing, etc. as well as serve their religious needs.

On March 29, 1973, NY T-8 said the Albanian-American Catholic League planned to hold a peaceful demonstration on April 1, 1973, in front of the United Nations in mid-afternoon in a protest of a news item appearing in NYC papers on March 28, 1973, stating that an Albanian Catholic priest, Reverend STEPHEN KUNI, a labor camp inmate, had been executed by the Albanian Government for secretly baptizing a child of a fellow inmate. All Albanian exile and emigre groups were invited to participate in the demonstration.

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On April 2, 1973, NY T-8 said the demonstration on April 1, 1973, took place as scheduled between 3:00 p.m. and 4:15 p.m. in front of the United Nations and about 300 people took part in the peaceful protest. Due to the rainy weather, the turnout was disappointing. NY T-8 stated that about 200 of the demonstrators proceeded to the vicinity of the Albanian Native Nation Mission (ANUM), 250 East 87th Street, NYC, and peacefully demonstrated on Second Avenue and 87th Street from 4:15 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

On April 11, 1973, NY T-3 said Reverend OKOSHI and VUJAN SOKOLI, Treasurer of the Albanian-American Catholic League, were interviewed on the FARBY FANDY radio show at 11:15 p.m., April 2, 1973, during which they articulated their case against religious persecution in Albania.

NY T-8 said the Albanian-American Catholic League will sponsor a dinner on April 29, 1973, at St. Joseph's Church Community House, 1987 Washington Avenue, Bronx, NY.

On April 26, 1973, NY T-7 said that heretofore dinners sponsored by the Albanian-American Catholic League had been held in NYC at nice hotels at \$15.00 to \$20.00 per person. In order to accommodate those Albanian-Americans who could not afford to pay such a high price, the charge for the dinner on April 29, 1973, would be \$6.00 per person. Chairman of the dinner was TOMIN MIRAKAJ.

On May 4, 1973, NY T-7 said the dinner sponsored by the Albanian-American Catholic League on April 29, 1973, was attended by more people than had been expected. Some of the Albanian emigres in attendance at the dinner started shooting revolvers in the air as a young lady was singing, and the police had to be called in to quiet things down. NY T-7 explained that the Albanian emigres who had come to the United States from Yugoslavia are uneducated and feel that they are free to do anything they want to in the United States. NY T-7 stated that as a result of the actions of a "few bad apples", the Albanian-American Catholic League will no longer sponsor "cheap" dinners at least not until the emigres responsible for the shooting have been educated to the ways of civilization in the free world.

VI. COMMUNIST INFLUENCE AMONG ALBANIANS IN THE NYC AREA

The sources mentioned in this report had no information that the Communist Party, United States of America (CP, USA) had infiltrated the Albanian community in

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NYC. They had no information that any of the Albanian-Americans had membership in the CP, USA.

VII. PROPAGANDA ACTIVITIES

The sources mentioned in this report had no information concerning propaganda activities in the NYC area by Albanian-Americans in behalf of the Communist regime of Albania.

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